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THE WHITE PLAINS RACIAL BALANCE PLAN (INTERIM).
WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, N.Y.

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WHITE PLAINS'S PLAN FOR RACIAL BALANCE IN THE SCHOOLS WAS FORMULATED IN RESPONSE TO A BOARD OF EDUCATION RULING THAT ALL CITY SCHOOLS MAINTAIN A MINIMUM NEGRO ENROLLMENT OF 10 PERCENT AND THAT NO SCHOOL BE MORE THAN 30 PERCENT NEGRO. BY SEPTEMBER 1964 ATTENDANCE LINES WERE REDRAWN FOR THE CITY'S 10 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, AND 20 PERCENT OF ALL ELEMENTARY PUPILS WERE REQUIRED TO CHANGE THEIR SCHOOLS. A NEGRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WHICH WAS 64 PERCENT NEGRO IN THE INNER CITY AREA WAS CONVERTED INTO AN ADULT EDUCATION AND MANPOWER RETRAINING CENTER. AS A RESULT OF THE PLAN, NINE PERCENT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POPULATION REQUIRED BUSING. ALTHOUGH THE BUSING PROGRAM MET WITH SOME COMMUNITY RESISTANCE, IT WAS WIDELY SUPPORTED AND HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL. BEFORE THE SCHOOLS OPENED IN SEPTEMBER 1964, PTA GROUPS SENT LETTERS TO PARENTS AND PUPILS WELCOMING THEM TO THEIR NEW SCHOOLS, AND MEETINGS WERE HELD WITH PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS. COMMUNITY SUPPORT WAS ACTIVELY DEMONSTRATED WHEN THE BOARD PRESIDENT WHO HAD SUPPORTED THE PLAN WAS RE-ELECTED BY A WIDE MAJORITY OVER AN "ANTI-PLAN" CANDIDATE. A 1957-64 CHRONOLOGY OF BACKGROUND EVENTS AND A TABULAR ANALYSIS OF PUPIL REGISTRATION BY SCHOOL FROM 1963 TO 1967 ARE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT. (LB)

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White Plains Public Schools
5 Homeside Lane
White Plains, New York

May 9, 1965

THE WHITE PLAINS RACIAL BALANCE PLAN

The sixteenth of April, 1964, is a day White Plains will long remember. On that date, the Board of Education of this city district of some 60,000 inhabitants committed its educational resources, wholeheartedly and for all time, to the principle of controlled integration in the public schools.

CONVINCED that racial segregation, no matter what its cause, produces inferior education for minority and majority group alike, the White Plains Board of Education on April 16, 1964, ruled that henceforth a minimum Negro enrollment of 10 per cent would be maintained in all school buildings and that no facility should have a Negro enrollment exceeding 30 per cent.

AS A RESULT of this resolution and the sweeping changes which ensued in the fall of 1964, White Plains has been termed a "lighthouse district" in New York State. It is the first city district in this state to adopt and immediately implement a citywide integration program of these proportions, and it is one of a few districts of any size to implement a comprehensive solution to de facto segregation.

The Board's decision reshuffled attendance lines for every one of the district's 10 elementary schools, required transportation to be instituted for nine per cent of the elementary pupils enrolled in White Plains City Schools, and necessitates a change of school for 20 per cent of all elementary pupils.

One grammar school in the heart of the city was converted into an adult education and manpower retraining facility. Its former pupils were reassigned to other buildings throughout the city. These innovations were implemented in

September, 1964, with the support of most residents of the community and the school system is now happily completing its first full year under the new White Plains Racial Balance Plan. The scope of the plan is dramatically illustrated by the racial balance enrollment statistics attached hereto.

As with any major disruption of established custom, some community disaffection was encountered. A small group of citizens contested in the courts the transportation system which was a key to the entire balance program.

The Board's judgment was vindicated this spring, however, when the courts refused to upset the plan.

Community acceptance, and the encouragement given by the State Education Department, are the solid foundation on which the White Plains Racial Balance Plan has been constructed.

The groundwork had been laid by Dr. Carroll F. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education during the decade preceding 1964. The Board resolution of April 16, 1964, was a culmination of their efforts. For more than 10 years they had struggled to maintain a reasonable racial balance in the various schools by redrawing attendance lines for several buildings from time to time. Construction sites had been selected judiciously, with a view to preventing future ghetto schools and, in 1958, the Superintendent and the Board had decided to build one city-wide high school, instead of two separate senior high facilities which would have fostered eventual de facto segregation no matter where they were located. The new senior high opened in 1960.

Meanwhile, special programs had been inaugurated to enrich the background of the 17 to 20 per cent of White Plains pupils who could be considered culturally

disadvantaged. Special programs and courses were also designed for their parents, to draw them into closer contact with the city education program, and a variety of classes had been instituted to provide adult education and vacational training for both young adult dropouts and older workers.

For programsdevised to open the door of education opportunity, and for the Racial Balance Program, The Reporter Dispatch, newspaper in White Plains, lent constructive and invaluable support through intensive, objective news coverage and warm editorial endorsement.

"White Plains is a lighthouse district," said Theron Johnson, Director of the Division of Intercultural Relations, State Education Department, when he addressed a conference of 250 city leaders at the time the Board was outlining the Racial Balance Plan.

This spring, Mr. Johnson again praised White Plains and cited the "tremendous leadership of the Superintendent of Schools, the administrative staff and the Board in recognizing that even in White Plains, a favored community in many ways, the concentration of Negro youngsters in one of its elementary schools was an educational disadvantage to all youngsters."

The Balance Plan, Mr. Johnson said, was inaugurated "in a most statesman-like way" through consultation with community groups and a systematic marshaling of community support.

"Because of this thoughtful, careful approach," he said, "the plan has worked smoothly and has received the strong commendation of the State Education Department as the kind of leadership and approach we hope to see in all districts."

In seeking a solution, the Board established these criteria:

1. To maintain the neighborhood school for as many children as possible.

2. To provide for only a minimum amount of change for both white and Negro pupils.

3. To establish an equitable distribution of Negro children in all schools.

4. To provide in the plan for both permanence and flexibility.

The Board considered a range of alternatives, and chose the best available combination. The proposal was then discussed with representatives of the Rochambeau PTA which included leaders of the Negro community. Before it was made public, the plan was also discussed with the mayor and members of the City Council, members of the administrative and supervisory staff of the schools, and the professional and civil service staff at Rochambeau.

Between July 29, 1963, when The Reporter Dispatch carried an article entitled "School Desegregation - Where Does the City Stand?" and March 23, 1964, when the Board's proposal was presented publicly for the first time at the meeting held at the Church Street School, there were more than 15 articles in the newspaper dealing with school desegregation and publicizing the efforts of the Board of Education to correct racial imbalance.

Attendance at the first public presentation on March 23 was by invitation only. Those invited included members of the clergy, the presidents and officers of civic and neighborhood associations, service clubs, civil rights groups, and the PTA units. It also included representatives from the Urban Renewal Department and various community social service agencies. At a well-attended meeting on April 9, members of the Rochambeau PTA endorsed the Board's plan with only one dissenting vote. At a public meeting at the high school on April 13, the Board again received overwhelming support for its plan. When the Board adopted the plan on April 16, the

250 people present gave a standing ovation. Further indication of community approval was given on May 5, when Board President, Andrew R. Stevenson, was re-elected (by a vote of 2,952 to 502) to another five year term over a write in candidate who had opposed the Board's plan for integration.

TO SMOOTH THE TRANSITION, meetings were arranged so that parents, teachers, administrators and children would understand the impending change. PTA groups in each school sent "welcome" letters during the summer to pupils and parents who would be new to the respective schools in September.

By fall, the community was ready. The Racial Balance Plan was effected in September, 1964 with no more excitement than the normal high spirits associated with opening day.

As the first year draws to a close, it can safely be said that integration has won the enthusiastic support of the vast majority of the residents of White Plains.

May 9, 1965

RACIAL BALANCE IN WHITE PLAINS

---- A CHRONOLOGY

Racial balance is not a new idea in White Plains. Historically, Superintendent Carroll F. Johnson and the Board of Education have kept an anxious eye on attendance areas where minority groups seemed likely to become concentrated.

Preventive measures have been devised to counteract housing patterns which otherwise would have created ghetto schools. Attendance areas have been drawn and redrawn; sites for future schools have been chosen with care, and a single new high school--to serve all the city--was constructed.

Today, the racial composition of each schoolhouse gives visible testimony to the White Plains conviction that segregated education is inferior education, detrimental alike to minority and majority.

Here set forth are the significant mileposts that mark the path which led White Plains to Racial Balance In The Public Schools.

1957 --- Church Street School, a new elementary facility, was opened in February. The old Ferris Avenue School which had come to have a predominantly Negro enrollment, was abandoned and the new attendance area for Church Street was drawn to achieve integration.

Negro enrollment in this elementary facility was thereby reduced from 67 per cent (Ferris Avenue figure) to 25 per cent, figure for the new Church Street School.

1957-58 -- Planning for expanded high school facilities began. It was apparent that constructing two high schools would sooner or later lead to de facto segregation, no matter how carefully school sites were chosen.

Decision: Build one high school to serve the entire district.

1960--- The new all-city high school was opened. Elementary and junior high school attendance areas were rezoned. The old high school was converted into a combination elementary and junior high facility. Post Road School, formerly a junior high, became an elementary school.

This rezoning created a better racial balance among the junior high schools, which were in danger of becoming either predominantly white or predominantly Negro.

1960 --- But the heart of the problem, it was obvious, lay in the heart of the city, where an area of apartment buildings and low income housing was rapidly turning into a ghetto.

Decision: Redraw attendance lines for Rochambeau School. Three apartment buildings in the Winbrook low income housing project were thus shifted to two other elementary school zones.

Dilemma: On paper, in March the rezoning appeared effective, reducing Negro enrollment at Rochambeau from 57 per cent to 46 per cent. The plan was scheduled for implementation in September. When September arrived, however, a disturbing pattern of housing transition emerged: Negro enrollment at Rochambeau had risen to 53 per cent in spite of the new attendance lines.

1963 ---- Crisis: Rochambeau School in the heart of the city again was predominantly Negro--60 per cent. By mid-February, 1964, the percentage had risen to 64. There was no way to solve the problem through attendance area revision.

1964 --- The Racial Balance Plan: The Board of Education, after intensive study of alternatives, decided the time had come to seek a permanent solution. Henceforth, the Board unanimously resolved, no school building in White Plains would have a minority group enrollment (Negro) of less than 10 per cent, no greater than 30 per cent.

TO THIS END, Rochambeau Elementary School in the heart of the city was converted into an adult education and manpower retraining facility. Its pupils were dispersed among the city's other 10 elementary schools. Children from three of the Winbrook low income housing units and children from the city center area were to be transported to their new schools. This is the Racial Balance Plan which went into effect last September, 1964, affecting every elementary school in the city, and re-assigning to different school buildings approximately 20 per cent of all elementary grade youngsters. Some white pupils in junior high grades were also shifted. They moved from Highlands School to the East View School to reduce enrollment at Highlands and make room for elementary pupils rezoned into the Highlands facility.

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WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ANALYSIS OF PUPIL REGISTRATION BY SCHOOL
October 1, 1963
April 1, 1964
October 1, 1964
April 1, 1965
SHOWING PER CENT NEGRO

School	10/1/1963 Reg.	% Negro	4/1/1964 Reg.	% Negro	10/1/1964 Reg.	% Negro	4/1/1965 Reg.	% Negro
ELEMENTARY								
Battle Hill	454	13.7	460	15.7	475	18.9	475	18.7
Church St.	386	34.2	365	32.1	338	23.7	337	24.3
East View El.	348	31.9	349	35.0	309	31.7	314	33.1
Geo. Wash.	338	--	337	.6	410	17.1	410	17.8
Highlands	379	2.9	385	2.6	427	12.6	444	12.2
Mamaroneck	523	10.5	528	9.7	620	19.2	626	19.3
North St.	314	.6	317	.6	349	15.8	346	15.3
Post Road	547	28.2	570	28.1	699	19.0	716	23.2
Ridgeway	441	.7	448	.7	547	16.5	554	15.8
Rochambeau	520	60.4	522	61.7	--	--	--	--
Rosedale	303	--	316	--	420	24.0	419	23.1
Total Elementary	4553	18.5	4597	18.7	4594	19.8	4641	19.9
JUNIOR HIGH								
Battle Hill	300	17.3	307	18.9	283	21.2	285	20.3
East View	803	15.7	800	15.1	823	15.3	815	15.2
Highlands	901	15.0	899	15.1	868	16.2	870	16.6
Total Junior High	2004	15.6	2006	15.7	1974	16.6	1970	16.6
Senior High School	2296	12.2	2241	12.0	2287	14.0	2225	14.0
Grand Total All Schools	8853	16.2	8844	16.3	8855	17.6	8836	17.7

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WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ANALYSIS OF PUPIL REGISTRATION BY SCHOOL

October 1, 1966

SHOWING PER CENT NEGRO

School	No. of Negroes	Others	Total	% Negro
ELEMENTARY				
Battle Hill Elementary	100	404	504	19.8
Church Street	95	267	362	26.2
East View Elementary	74	196	270	27.4
George Washington	59	334	393	15.0
Highlands Elementary	45	368	413	10.9
Mamaroneck Avenue	150	459	609	24.6
North Street	69	293	362	19.1
Post Road	122	620	742	16.4
Ridgeway	83	433	516	16.1
Rosedale	83	349	432	19.2
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	880	3723	4603	19.1
JUNIOR HIGH				
Battle Hill	68	204	272	25.0
East View	125	705	830	15.1
Highlands	150	731	881	17.0
TOTAL JUNIOR HIGH	343	1640	1983	17.3
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	286	1959	2245	12.7
GRAND TOTAL ALL SCHOOLS	1509	7322	8831	17.1

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WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ANALYSIS OF PUPIL REGISTRATION BY SCHOOL

April 3, 1967

SHOWING PER CENT NEGRO

School	No. of Negroes	Others	Total	% Negro
ELEMENTARY				
Battle Hill Elementary	101	407	508	19.9
Church Street	93	281	374	24.9
East View Elementary	72	210	282	25.5
George Washington	53	324	377	14.1
Highlands Elementary	46	379	425	10.8
Mamaroneck Avenue	151	462	613	24.6
North Street	67	295	362	18.5
Post Road	129	603	732	17.6
Ridgeway	69	432	501	13.8
Rosedale	75	349	424	17.7
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	856	3742	4598	18.6
JUNIOR HIGH				
Battle Hill	68	205	273	24.9
East View	125	712	837	14.9
Highlands	150	719	869	17.3
TOTAL JUNIOR HIGH	343	1636	1979	17.3
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	272	1919	2191	12.4
GRAND TOTAL ALL SCHOOLS	1471	7297	8768	16.8

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WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ANALYSIS OF PUPIL REGISTRATION BY SCHOOL

October 1, 1967

SHOWING PER CENT NEGRO

School	No. of Negroes	Others	Total	% Negro
ELEMENTARY				
Battle Hill Elementary	97	383	480	20.2
Church Street	108	284	392	27.6
East View Elementary	46	219	265	17.4
George Washington	67	333	400	16.8
Highlands Elementary	35	377	412	8.5
Mamaroneck Avenue	172	479	651	26.4
North Street	65	291	356	18.3
Post Road	129	587	716	18.0
Ridgeway	75	437	512	14.6
Rosedale	70	320	390	17.9
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	864	3710	4574	18.9
JUNIOR HIGH				
Battle Hill	74	234	308	24.0
East View	128	680	808	15.8
Highlands	134	719	853	15.7
TOTAL JUNIOR HIGH	336	1633	1969	17.1
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	289	1994	2283	12.7
GRAND TOTAL ALL SCHOOLS	1489	7714	8826	16.9

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